1970 COMIC ART CONVENTION

THE MOON IS OURS

SUPERMAN
DC
NATIONAL COMICS
LET'S GO FOR THE STARS!

Welcome to

JULY 3rd, 4th, and 5th, 1970
AT THE
PENN TOP/SKY TOP ROOMS
STATLER HILTON HOTEL
33RD STREET & 7TH AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY, NEW YORK

CHAIRMAN	Phil Seuling
PUBLICATIONS	Bill Pearson
FILMS	Chris Steinbrunner
PUBLICITY	Dave Kaufman
REGISTRATION	Anne Sapolsky
	Meri Kornstein
ART CONTEST	Sal Parascandolo
COSTUME EVENT	Carole Seuling
DEALERS ROOM	Doriano Masdonati
FANZINE SALES	John Nyman
SECURITY	Andy Hom
	Eric Spruiell
	Mike Nolan

Photos in Program and Progress Report by Sal Parascandolo

1970 COMIC ART CONVENTION PROGRAM © 1970 by Bill Pearson. Address inquiries, complaints, and suggestions for next year to Phil Seuling, 2883 W. 12th Street, Brooklyn, New York, 11224. Volunteers gratefully appreciated.

PROGRAM

FRIDAY, JULY 3

10 a.m. Opening of registration, dealers' area, and exhibits.

12 noon. Announcement of Final Schedule and Welcome. Phil Seuling.

1 p.m. Keynote Address. Neal Adams.

3 p.m. The History of *Mad*. Slide show by John Putnam, *Mad*'s art director.

4 p.m. Reminiscence and Tribute to the late Wendell Crowley. John Putnam, Jerry DeFuccio, more.

5 p.m. Film showing under the supervision of Chris Steinbrunner. To 8 p.m.

9 p.m. Auction I.

11 p.m. Close of day's activities.

SATURDAY, JULY 4

10 a.m. Opening of registration, dealers' area, and exhibits.

11 a.m. The Adventure Pulps - Bob Weinberg and Lohr McKinstry - with a slide show of the great covers.

12:30 p.m. Warren Publishing Company's annual awards presentations.

2 p.m. Comic Art in the Field of Education -
Byron Preiss: Philadelphia's Tilden School Annex
Glen Johnson: Utah's Indian schools
Don Perlin: the Black Experience

4 p.m. Auction II. All proceeds to be donated to Philadelphia's Tilden Center Annex public school. Byron Preiss.

5:30 p.m. PANEL: The Direction of Comic Books in the 1970's. Moderator, Dick Giordano.

7 p.m. Costume Parade and Awards.

11 p.m. Close of day's Activities.

SUNDAY, JULY 5

10 a.m. Opening of registration, dealers' area, and exhibits.

11:30 a.m. The Academy of Comic Book Arts. Debut, Declaration of Intentions, Questions and Answers.

1 p.m. Luncheon honoring Bill Everett and Carmine Infantino.

3.p.m. Amateur Art Awards.

3:30 p.m. PANEL: Sword and Sorcery. Moderator, Roy Thomas.

4:30 p.m. Auction III and Gripe Session.

5 p.m. Close of Convention Activities.

GUEST OF HONOR

BILL EVERETT

Bill Everett can rightfully be credited with a great contribution to the establishment of a major comic book publishing company. It was he, who in 1939 wrote, drew, and edited in order to pull together the elements that then formed a small production unit. Eventually the company called Timely (today it is Marvel) grew from the seed he helped nurture. Yet this feat is not what he is best known for.

Of the parade of characters Bill Everett has created many are remembered vaguely, difficult to recall. Skyrocket Steel, Dirk the Demon, The Fin, Music Master, Hydroman, Amazing Man, all were created or illustrated by Bill and none has done much to insure him a place in the history of the medium. Yet his imaginative creativity does earn him such a niche, because of one of the best known characters ever in comics—Prince Namor, the Sub-Mariner.

The dynamic and original serial of the Antarctic and its hidden civilization of green-skinned warriors (the females and immature boys were of Caucasian hue)—the story of a growing Prince Namor and his mother, Princess Fen, and his father, Leonard McKenzie—was so appealing that virtually every kid who took a swim during the 1940's could imagine cutting swiftly through the sea with winged heels. The story had its special tone and remarkable consistentcy, under Everett, which few other writers could hope to match. Unfortunately, the stories not produced exclusively by Everett have never possessed any insight into what Everett's vision of the character was originally all about.

Everett was born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, but spent his school years through high school in Arizona. When his family moved back to Massachusetts, he attended the Vesper George Art School where he decided to make a

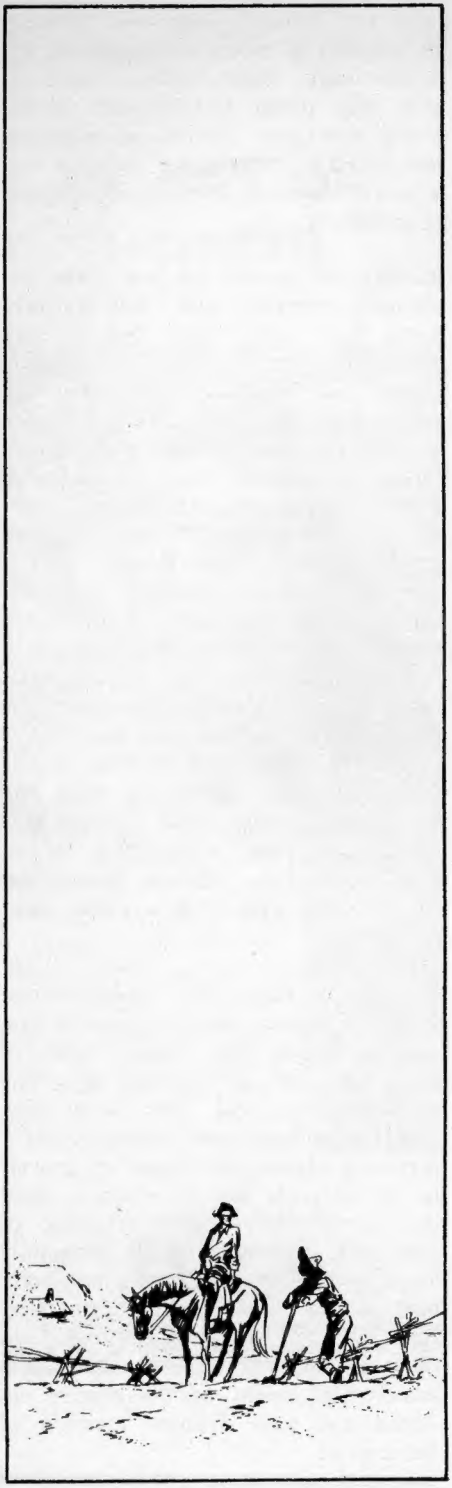
career of art. He worked first in a large advertising agency, then on the art staff of the Boston Traveler, then on the New York Herald Tribune, and then as art director of a national magazine. Not having the opportunity to do original work there in his chosen field, he left to do free-lance work, and eventually became art editor of Funnies, Inc., where he helped supervise the creation of the first comic book material of Timely Publications, today known as Marvel Comics.

For this company, he created Sub-Mariner, who was of course another adventure hero with special non-human powers. But there he and other super-heroes parted company for in the strip was the first use in comic books of the writer's technique called characterization. Sullen, resentful Sub-Mariner, spitting out imprecations and boasts at anyone nearby, was a new thing to readers. Consistently from one story to the next he carried grudges, trusted no one, and as his story became known, it turned out he had reasons. Motivated by his half-cast origins, he was not willing to give humans an inch. Expecting the worst from people, he was not often disappointed. His negative attitude finally erupted into its most hostile outburst in his famous struggle with the Human Torch. No wonder he was popular! He was so antagonistic, misunderstood, wrongheaded, and brash that he might easily have been you or I.

Bill devoted most of his attention to Sub-Mariner (although also working for the Centaur and Curtis and Regular Fellers companies) until finding himself in the army during World War II. During this time, other writers and artists took over his features, and the quality of the Sub-Mariner saga gradually declined. Even the cliché used by its imitators—an origin based on the Atlantis legend—replaced the clever and original concept of Everett. Immediately upon his return following the war, Everett swept this nonsense away and returned his creation as much as possible to its former state. Other artists, however, were also doing Sub-Mariner stories during this same period—so everyone was forced to compromise to some extent in an effort to produce some sense of uniformity.

In 1949, the bottom fell out of the super-hero market, and Sub-Mariner, along with most other heroes, was forced into a several-year retirement. During this period, Everett turned out horror stories for the company. Then, in 1953, the idea of reviving the super-heroes occurred to the company, and with speed but little attention to quality, old titles reappeared. Both Captain America and The Human Torch emerged so shakily designed, that they soon winked out again. But Everett himself took charge of most of the new Sub-Mariner series, and managed to make it succeed where the others had failed. However, this was the horror comic era, and some of the stories were forced into this mold. Soon the Sub-Mariner comic book entered also into a retirement from which it has never really been rescued, despite the fact that the title itself is again upon the stands.

During its time, the Timely-Marvel group of comics has produced a few clinkers, some fine lesser lights, a good long run of entertaining comic book features, and three super-stars. The Human Torch and Captain America personify abstractions; they are powerful as concepts and as symbols. And the Sub-Mariner, mythic offspring of man and elemental, stands arrogantly alone as the thinking man's anti-hero, part of our common frame of reference, part of us. There is reason to the argument that the company's finest achievement might be the acutely designed and well wrought creation of Bill Everett.



GUEST OF HONOR

CARMINE INFANTINO

COLOR HIM CARMINE
By E. Nelson Bridwell

Mr. Carmine Infantino will be guest of honor at the 1970 Comic Art Convention. Since I have more than a passing acquaintance with the guy, I shall endeavor to write a sketch of his background.

Born May 24, 1925, Carmine was educated at P.S. 75 and 85, Halsey Jr. High, the School of Industrial Art, Art Students League, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Queens College School of Visual Arts, and (he says) the School of Hard Knocks.

Although he had started drawing favorite comic characters, like Dick Tracy and Little Orphan Annie as a child, all those art schools managed to alter his style so that today it is somewhat different from the styles of Chester Gould and Harold Gray. *Quite* somewhat.

In 1946, Carmine took some samples of his work to National Periodical Publications. Sheldon Mayer (who was National's editorial director then) liked his stuff.

He was put on a *Ghost Patrol* story, then went on to *Johnny Thunder*—and in that strip introduced the Black Canary, who later took over the feature from Johnny, while a Western

hero appropriated his name. Carmine has since been a cornucopia of spirited artwork, portraying the original Flash, Boy Commandos, Gang Busters, Detective Chimp, King Farraday (of *Danger Trail* and *I Spy).* Pow-Wow Smith, Super-Chief, Space Museum, Adam Strange, Batman, and (of course) the new Flash. His art on *Strange Sports Stories* is currently being revived in *DC Special.*

The new Flash. Let's pause a moment at that one. What did Carmine do that imprinted his style on the character and made it his own? Well, movement; let's take movement. Instead of speed lines, we now saw moving, overlapping images. And we saw angles and tracking shots and close-ups alternating with long shots and well-framed scenes and good composition. Infantino the cinematographer, doing his thing. Illustration board is a flat surface and yet we saw the Flash alive and moving.

But alas! those halcyon days of seeing his work page after page and monthly are no more. The reason one seldom sees new artwork by Rouge Enfant (as he has sometimes signed his work) is that, since 1967, Carmine has been editorial director of his outfit (NPP). A tragedy, some say, to stop the flow of those magnificent pencil lines, which once earned him an award as best comic book artist from the National Cartoonists' Society, not to mention a few Alley Awards. But despair not—there are some new *Flash* covers by him coming up. If our luck continues good, even his new vice-presidency will not completely still his incredible pen, and we may hope for more Infantino work. In any case, his drive and his creative flair and his cinematic attention to the effects of comic art will still combine to be a moving force at National Periodicals. Good fortune to them. And us all.

SUPERMAN
DC
NATIONAL COMICS
JULY NO. 78
STOP!
this is the NEW...
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
15¢
GREEN LANTERN
CO-STARRING
GREEN ARROW
HE'S THE ONLY "FAMILY" I'VE GOT!
LET HIM GO, YOU MANIACS..
OR I'LL KILL YOU BOTH!
S 460

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

NEAL ADAMS IS...

.....Meticulous; a perfectionist; involved; innovative; infamous; articulate; incisive; spooky; half out of his mind half of the time; tormented; well liked.

.....A self-styled genius at penciling, inking, scripting, coloring, and missing deadlines; a probing mind; brilliant; hard to describe; a dynamic personality; as a technician, almost perfect; straight-forward and honest; super-sensitive about his own work.

.....A family man, father of four; full of insight; full of it!; deeply involved; ego-maniacal; twenty-nine years old; meddlesome; a native New Yorker; a self-proclaimed expert on everything; completely confident; obnoxious at times; ahead of his time.

.....Verbose; opinionated; concerned with the work of others; a good friend, but only a fair to middlin' enemy (not vindictive enough); no clock-watcher; ridiculous; ambitious; a "Boy Wonder" in the comics field, who began working for the Archie comics group at the age of eighteen (two weeks after he'd finished high school), and assisted on the Bat Masterson comic strip before going into the advertising field (doing many comics-style pages and booklets for the firm of Johnstone and Cushing); inquisitive; totally involved; a procrastinator; prolific.

.....Intelligent, but too obstinate to admit he's wrong when he *is* wrong; very talented; very imaginative; a super-ego; perhaps the most able and technically knowledgeable artist the comics field has ever known; the youngest guy ever to have had his own syndicated newspaper strip (the Ben Casey strip, which he started at the age of twenty-one, and which ran for three and a half-years); a creative mind; a literal "pain in the butt," but an important cog in the comic art wheel; constantly late, if he shows up at all; totally opinionated!

.....Able to pencil seven pages a day, if he'd only sit down and get to work; one of the founders and first Vice-President of the Academy of Comic Book Arts; an unabashed comics fan; arrogant; vociferous; anachronistic; potentially a legend in his own time, and maybe even after it; a cookie freak; aggravating; and humble.

...AND HE'D BE THE FIRST ONE TO TELL YOU SO!

—Mark Hanerfeld

HAL FOSTER

INTERVIEWED BY GIL KANE AT THE 1969 COMIC ART CONVENTION

LUNCHEON

JULY, 1969

KANE: I'd like to preface the interview with a few remarks. What Hal Foster brought into comics, and I'm cutting comics free from illustration because it's an entirely different bag, was more than superior skills as a draftsman, as a designer. What he brought into comics was an intelligence and a spirit that created the tradition of the romantic hero as we know it; he is absolutely the father of the whole romantic adventure hero saga that adventure comics is all about.

And one of the great things about his work is that in the area of romance he brought restraint, which is almost

impossible—it's always a self indulgent subject. You'll always find in romance, work which is so elaborate and so full of a suped-up accentuated quality that you never find elements of restraint, of harmony, of a considered line, a considered design, or of naturalism. Naturalism is one thing you hardly ever find with romance, and yet Mr. Foster's work has that quality of naturalism within the framework of romanticism that gives it enormous range and appeal. He can tell a story, and make it raw and savage, and make it lyrical, and make it very, very human, where any kind of violence or death or tragedy that occurs in the script has meaning simply because the characters exist as people and not just athletic postures jumping all over the page.

And even in terms of athletic postures, it was Hal Foster who created the basic standards just for the way heros stand in comics. The whole concept of nobility and aristocracy which is part and parcel of **Prince Valiant** *(but of course was seen all the way through* **Tarzan***) is what Mr. Foster brought into the field. While a lot of artists have a kind of magnificence in their work, just through their vitality, hardly any have reserve, understatement and nobility, because there is a quality of mind, spirit and a sense of control, discipline and restraint required.*

Mr. Foster is just the most superb craftsman tied to a romantic spirit. In my mind, it is unlikely that the Egyptian sequence in **Tarzan** *will ever be duplicated; it's probably the finest sustained sequence ever done. Whatever comics have in terms of a visual medium, whatever potential they have to be considered as a basis for art, it has to come out of an examination of Mr. Foster's work. Now, in starting the interview, I'd like to ask what your influences were when you started. Did you have any really formal education in terms of art?*

FOSTER: Yes. I lived in Winnipeg, Canada, the time I started serious drawing and ...well, my father was not a business man, and when he went to work we expected to be fifty or sixty dollars poorer when he came home. He was that kind of business man. He went bankrupt in mid-Winter, of course, and I had to quit school and go to work. That ended my formal education before I had gotten out of day school. But I was interested in drawing, and not being able to afford models, I had to use myself and a cracked mirror. In Winnipeg, I would like to inform you, the temperature sometimes goes down to forty below. Though my room was heated, it was still below zero, so I learned to sketch very quickly [laughter]. I studied the work of all the different painters and illustrators; I was interested in them, but somehow my work was very unsatisfactory. I went into art in Winnipeg; my first professional job, I should say the first job I'd kept for years, was in mail order catalogues. They gave me ladies underwear to illustrate for the catalogue. I put my whole soul into that work [laughter]. I don't know when I'd been more interested. I was very naive in those days, and to make these discoveries that ladies' undergarments were so charming, so...

But, I reached the limit in Winnipeg, my illustration work, advertising and things like that. I got the best work that was around, but it wasn't enough, it wasn't good enough, and I wanted bigger fields. And still not being able to afford railroad fare, I mounted my bicycle and rode all the way down to Chicago. And the afternoon I got there I checked in at the YMCA Hotel, and ten minutes later I was robbed. Never go to a shower in the YMCA Hotel without taking your key and carrying it into the shower with you. If you leave it in a raincoat hanging up outside the shower, somebody's bound to, you know, steady himself on the wall and a hand will absolutely accidentally slip

into your pocket and come up with the key. So there I was in Chicago, broke, nothing but a bicycle and the suit I stood in. It gives you a great desire to achieve something—like a square meal [laughter].

Things cheered up a bit; finally I was wealthy enough to go to art school. Work all week and study all night and weekends... don't think I'm asking for sympathy for the hard work I did, because it was all so darned interesting, and all the work I'd done up to that time, all the practicing, sort of jelled. As soon as I got a formal education in art, I knew the structures, the fundamental parts of art, and all the little things I'd learned just sort of came together, just like cement. And so I was thankful for every little bit of experience, everything I had.

That's why I'm one of the luckiest cartoonists today, because everything I've done has been an ingredient to **Prince Valiant.** I spent quite some time in the woods, as a trapper, a prospector and a guide. Now, when it comes to a background, when I draw an oak tree, it's an oak tree; if I'm drawing a spruce tree, it's a spruce. So all these things are in my memory, and the backgrounds are not only easy, but they're a delight. And almost everything... the reading, for instance... being broke during the winter when you know all your school friends are going to dances, going skating, to toboggan parties, social parties, and you have to stay at home, there is only one occupation you can enjoy and that's reading. So I had enforced reading. And all I read, it's all come into *Prince Valiant*; all the things that one picks up while reading are part of it. So I think most of my misfortunes have turned out to be profit.

KANE: I'd like to comment on the originality of the figure movement in **Tarzan**. *In strips durjng the period or in illustration before that, there was very little sense of naturalism in the action sequences. The action sequences in* **Tarzan** *have become the standards that everyone has used to develop his own point of view, but no one has the authenticity, the sense of authority that you have. I feel that there is something about being involved as an athlete yourself or having some understanding of control of your own body that gives an action sequence a greater feeling. And I was just wondering—it must be that you were very athletic or did a great deal of physical work when you were younger.*

FOSTER: A lot of physical work, yes. I can tell you the things I wasn't good at. I played football for five years, and I was pretty poor at that. I boxed professionally, once, and found I was yellow [laughter]. I played lacrosse, but I wasn't brilliant. Baseball, I was remarkable, the only thing is I couldn't throw to first base. So that, yes, my athletic career was a lot of mediocrity, but it was enjoyable.

KANE: But since it was all first hand it obviously came through in your work, and it's almost impossible to achieve that same quality of grace and authority that is reflected in your material.

FOSTER: Well, failure helps you. For instance, if you draw figures as I did from the mirror, you know when you've gone wrong. You look at it, you criticize your own work. You find that—well, I found that there were no bones in my body. It was all so much... well, it looked like puffed up sausages; I could draw all the muscles, I knew all the proportions, but nothing held it up. So when I went to art school and studied the skeleton, I found that the muscles were not much, you know, you could draw straight lines for muscles; it didn't make any difference as long as the bones were there. As long as you could tell where the bones were, how they could move, then you'd sud-

denly find you drew this just little mechanical structure which is the skeleton. You can put it in any form. So when you do that, why of course the whole thing is in balance; and if you know your shoulder will just go back so far, if you put it back further it's unnatural. You know that just from the mechanical structure.

KANE: In asking another question related to technique—one of the things I think has been overlooked is that sense of natural design and arrangement, the black and white patterns which are so understated and so subtle. I'm just wondering what influences you had that developed that marvelous sense of design and that control over a picture.

FOSTER: Envy of better artists, when I was in the commercial field; to see someone achieve, say, some very delightful composition. So you study his work to see how he did it. It's, oh, rather an idealistic theft. But you study the work of good artists. Why do you envy him? Because he has achieved, solved the problem that still puzzles you. Well, *he's* solved it; now it's yours. I learned composition from study; nobody can tell you what a good composition is.

KANE: Right. For the most part, it's public knowledge as to how you came to do **Tarzan**, *but I was wondering how you came to do* **Prince Valiant**. *Was it your choice of subject matter, something you'd been planning for a while? How did you arrive at the strip title and the entire concept?*

FOSTER: Well, I was a little bit fed up with *Tarzan*, because I didn't write the story. I wanted everything mine; I wanted to create something. And I was fascinated by history, romance, gallantry. *Buck Rogers* had gone way into the future; I knew very well that he was atomizing whole planets at that time. What can you do for an encore; you've got to break up a galaxy. So I went backwards in history, hunting for a period that I thought was interesting and different enough from our present day so that it would be a contrast. And so I went back and back and I came to the crusades. So I read up on the crusades, and that wasn't enough, it only lasted a couple of centuries. If you had a man come in, no matter how great a hero, he could only go so far, and then the crusades were through. So I went all the way back to the days of King Arthur, and I came up with the brilliant idea that nobody could read up any history books on King Arthur because nobody knows for certain just where Camelot was or whether King Arthur was real.

But I had an idea that I would like to do a fantasy. I was always just crazy about fairy tales. They had so much imagination; they were so much better than real life. Oh, Merlin was a wizard, and the knights all bragged about slaying dragons and giants, and that world seems to offer a big scope; and I started out that way. I had Prince Valiant meet a dragon in Merlin's court; he went out in Merlin's garden with little fairies flitting around instead of butterflies, and a nice friendly dragon lying there in the sun.

But somehow Prince Valiant became more and more of a character, someone that I knew personally; I knew just what he could do. He was me, if I had had the construction of me, if I hadn't let the Lord create me and I could create myself. I eliminated all my faults and gave myself all the virtues that I didn't have. And I was Prince Valiant, so I could write rather realistically about him. Prince Valiant stands at my shoulder when I'm writing and if I get him out of character, though I can't see him, I know he's shaking his head.

KANE: It occurs to me that **Prince Valiant**, *like* **Tarzan**, *has an influence that seems to stem from literature and traditional literary values as opposed to, say, the values of film which a lot of people utilize. I feel that the literary values and the sense of tradition in the material has given* **Prince Valiant** *exactly what it needs, a sense of it being history. Or a sense of it being a legend or saga retold without any infringement or corruption of modern day in it; it's perfect, it's sort of sealed in a 'lost horizon.' I've seen other people attempt to do take-offs on the* **Prince Valiant** *thing, because it has become an absolute standard for medieval drawing and story, but they make the mistake of constantly bringing in contemporary qualities of design, big glaring close-ups, which is wrong and lacks somehow that sense of leaning into the wind, that lyrical wistful quality of the fantasy of* **Prince Valiant**.

FOSTER: Well, as to having it historical, I've used history, the contemporary history of that day in the fifth century, and I had Prince Valiant meet Attila the Hun, and the Saxon leaders that led the invasion of England, and he was in at the sack of Rome by the Vandals; and I used up history, I used it up the first several years. I hung the Prince Valiant story on a sort of tapestry of authentic history and, oh, several years later I found that I was too extravagant; I ran out of history. If I'd known I was going to live this long, I would have saved some of it. But now I've got to, well, I can't use history anymore, the big jobs have all been done. I used a hundred years of history, because it's pretty hard to pin Prince Valiant down to one certain part of the century. So he's about thirty-five now, and he's gone through I'd say about two hundred years of history.

KANE: The quality of **Prince Valiant** *for a good portion of its life was the quality of the saga; that sense of a frontier being advanced, and there was that quality of constant surprise in the material simply because you were exposed to the barbarity of that time. Of course, there have been certain restrictive measures in comics, and there have been criticisms against those elements of violence that not everyone is ready to accept. There seems to have been a change in the strip, now that you see more of the domestic side of Prince Valiant, and there has been a greater focus on his oldest son. And I am just wondering; the way you're directing Val, is it totally of your own making and directing, or is there sort of some ominous presence behind you who is, you know, helping you pick a direction for the character?*

FOSTER: No, it's planned. I find that if there is too much action, you've got to build up the action to get... you know, if you've done one battle scene, in the next battle scene you have to put in several more knights and a few more corpses, and so on until you pile them up. So that a bit of action is followed by, oh, a little bit of home, the children, Prince Arn and some of the others...a little childish adventure, and then I can come back to some of the big ones. Just as you design a page, you have to design your story the same way. Action, then a downgrading of the action so that you can come up again, and you don't have to come up higher, you can come up to the same level of violence. In the page itself, you design it so that you'll have probably a big head, a dramatic expression that will show the character of whoever it is, then you can have a bit of action, then probably half figures, so that you get a variety, the same on the page that you do in the story, to keep it from getting monotonous.

KANE: Mr. Foster requested that towards the end of the interview he would take questions from the audience, so if anyone wants to ask questions...

QUESTION ONE: Do you think that if **Prince Valiant** *were introduced today it would do as well as it has done?*

FOSTER: Nobody could say; I don't think anybody could pass an opinion on that. I don't know what the taste is today.

QUESTION TWO: How closely do you stick to historical scholarship, and how much does the modern historical scholarship on the period you work in influence you? For instance, has the research they've been doing on the Vikings, up in your old part of the country as a matter of fact, affected your retelling of the part of the Prince Valiant story where he was in Finland?

FOSTER: That took quite a bit of research. I knew that the Vikings had come over as far as Newfoundland, and probably as far as Nova Scotia. And in order to get Prince Valiant across the ocean I had to study the winds and currents, the Westerlies, the Gulf Stream; all those things had to be taken into consideration. I wanted to explain it in detail; the direction I took him in was all plausible. From what research I've done, I don't think the Vikings ever got as far as Nova Scotia. But I think, I know there were probably Irish there before the Vikings, though there is no definite proof. But it's good to have a backing of history for anything you write that's apt to be as important as something like that.

QUESTION THREE: How many hours do you spend a week on each strip?

FOSTER: Fifty-three hours. That doesn't include the fan mail or the writing of the story; that's actual physical labor, from here up to here [indicates finger tip to elbow].

WOODY GELMAN: I am intrigued particularly with your backgrounds, because I think of all the strips ever produced that **Prince Valiant**, *and* **Little Nemo** *that I love so much, were the great background strips. And I was wondering which artist or what artwork provided the influence that allowed you to get so much detail in your work.*

FOSTER: I guess a desire to be authentic, and the fact that most of the backgrounds, especially in the beginning of *Prince Valiant*, were scenes that were particularly interesting to me; woods and mountains. As a prospector, I knew enough about geology to draw rocks and corrosion, and the woods. I know that every tree has a character, the same way as every animal has a character; when I draw trees I like each one to be identifiable.

GELMAN: When you do a castle, for example, do you plan it beyond the individual drawing; do you have to construct that castle?

FOSTER: Yes. In order to get your blacks and your spot of interest on the page, you have to, oh, make a rough sketch and then fit the architecture into...the doorway, or the turrets or something like that. But usually I go to my files. I've taken pictures of all, of most of the spots where Prince Valiant has been. I've gone to that particular country, and got pictures, movies, and I can always go to those for research because every bit of background shows time and space. That is, the buildings will show the time in history, and the terrain, the

trees, will show what part of the world you're in. For instance, if you see the flat-top pines, the tall cedars, you know you're in Rome, or Italy. Very few people stop to think about that, but every picture they've seen of Rome has those trees, so that immediately they know it's around Rome.

GELMAN: The Egyptian sequence Gil spoke of must have had a lot of research too, because that had a total feeling of Egypt.

FOSTER: Well, yes, that's all from photographs and clippings. I've never consciously copied anything. For instance, when I had to draw horses, I got photographs of horses and I studied them, sketched them out, and then from then on I just drew them from memory, all original. Everything I do is... originality, to use your imagination will give you an illustration that will hold together rather than copied-correct, whether it's architecture or what.

QUESTION FIVE: Have you ever thought of putting Prince Valiant in a sword and sorcery situation, where you have the hero pitted against witches and warlocks?

FOSTER: Yes, I had a character in the first sequences of *Prince Valiant,* where he met the witch Horrit, and he showed her the singing sword, and she went into a tizzy about it because she said it was the same sword as Flamberge, made by the same magician; and, oh, I had a little bit of sorcery. There was no magic done, but it was just superstitious belief.

QUESTION SIX: What was your primary source for the characters in the legend of Arthur, such as Gawain, and Arthur himself?

FOSTER: Oh, I had to just imagine all this. As you know, there's no portraits or anything of that day. And by the way, the arms and armor and the castles in *Prince Valiant* are completely phony—everybody compliments me on the authenticity of my work [laughter]. I'll out and out steal anything; steal from good authors and things like that if there's an honest buck in it.

But these castles... the Arthurian legend was written by Normans long after they had come over and conquered Britain, and they had no public libraries or research libraries, so they believed that conditions had always been just the way they were at that time. So they had Arthur and his knights dressed in Norman armor and jousting just as they did when the Arthurian legend was written, and of course the story had castles, and moats and drawbridges. But those didn't exist in the days of King Arthur. But I cannot draw King Arthur with a big black beard, dressed in bearskins with a few odds and ends of armor that the Romans left when they went out of Britain, because that is not the image people have. If I drew him as my research has shown he would be, nobody'd believe it.

QUESTION SIX: What about Mallory's tales of the Arthurian legend? I know there's no description of any kind of clothing, but I'm speaking of the characters themselves.

FOSTER: I couldn't use the same characters; they're too darned bloodthirsty. I just, I always kill the right people [laughter].

QUESTION SIX: I notice that you use the character of Gawain quite a lot. I read your version first and I was disappointed with Mallory's. I couldn't accept his Gawain after yours.

FOSTER: Yes, I put a lot of blood into Sir Gawain that I wish I had. You can do things with someone like Sir

Gawain. He can play the mandolin under a lady's window, whether she's married or not; you can even show his cloak going over the balcony and nobody complains, but if Prince Valiant gets drunk, everybody writes me and ...[laughter]. It's awfully hard to handle a hero like Prince Valiant, because in order to be a hero you've got to be a big prig, you know—he's got to be good and honest, and all these qualities that are not endearing [laughter]. Of course, Sir Gawain can get drunk and do all the things that Prince Valiant would like to do.

QUESTION SIX: T.H. White's version of Gawain is much more on a par with yours, except that there's a Gaelic influence there. The Gaelic influence has that same spirit of character that your Gawain has.

FOSTER: Yes; I wish I had had T.H. White's book before I wrote about Sir Gawain. I could have put a lot of odds and ends into his character.

QUESTION SEVEN: It's funny that Mr. Foster should be sitting next to Mr. Kane, because Gil Kane represents, like, the progressive element in the comic medium, while you, Mr. Foster, while we all seriously respect you highly for your original creations and your continuing technical excellence, you really haven't gone far at all in furthering the medium. Now, aside from the pressures of the syndicate and establishing the mystique of Prince Valiant, are you interested in defending the status quo and the reactionary influence of your strip? [laughter].

FOSTER: No; one thing I try to avoid—I try to avoid carrying any message whatsoever. I don't like to editorialize; I don't like to point out the excellence of virtue. In fact, I stay away from ...well, what *do* I stay away from? [laughter]. It's just the way the story runs. I don't like to see too much violence; I don't like to see blood spattered around because when you do that, that means you're trying to dramatize a fight. For instance, when two men fight, the reason for that fighting and the reason that the fight ends the way it does should be taken care of in the writing. But when you spill a lot of blood and show a head falling off or something like that, that means that you failed some place and you've got to use some dramatic gimmick in order to put it over. Anything that carries a message I stay away from. I don't stay away from it consciously, but it's just not part of me.

QUESTION SEVEN: Don't you believe there are ways of, like, expressing an emotion, or anything, in a style other than the illustrator's style that you use, and have it still fit within the strip?

FOSTER: Do you mean to change the writing or the illustration?

QUESTION SEVEN: Like, it's been years in **Prince Valiant** *(I don't have a lot of them, but, like I have enough to form an opinion)—but every time there's a certain emotion shown it's generally in the same style. Like, I really don't see an effort to, like, try new ideas, you know, in an innovative way.*

KANE: Can I answer that? Comics have more than a single point of view, and, just like any other form, it grows out of a tradition. Mr. Foster's work is totally encapsulated in a certain frame of reference. Within that frame of reference there are traditional values, traditional ways of telling a story, traditional attitudes. The strip and the character and the entire approach to it has the quality of a saga, and in order to maintain that quality and be true to its own purposes it has to stay within that frame of reference.

You couldn't possibly use, for instance, the close-ups and the movie techniques that Will Eisner or Harvey Kurtzman use, simply because it would be untrue to the intent of the material. And only the intent of the artist and the framework that he establishes is important to him. It may not have relevance to everything, but then what does? What piece of work can stand against the criticism that it does not satisfy both traditional values and contemporary values, or that it has an academic quality as opposed to a sense of vitality. No one piece of work can ever satisfy every person in the world. But for the artist to realize a degree of success, which no one can deny Mr. Foster, it is that, within the frame of reference he has established for himself, everything is consistent and everything works [applause].

FOSTER: I want to thank you very much for a very delightful afternoon; you're a very delightful audience, and you're a great profit to me. You know, an artist is so used to drawing faces that he finally comes down to a standard face, the same nose, the same eyes, the same expressions, until sometimes you draw a mob scene, and they look like a large family [laughter] But you people are a great profit to a cartoonist that wants to see a lot of different faces, and I want to thank you [applause].

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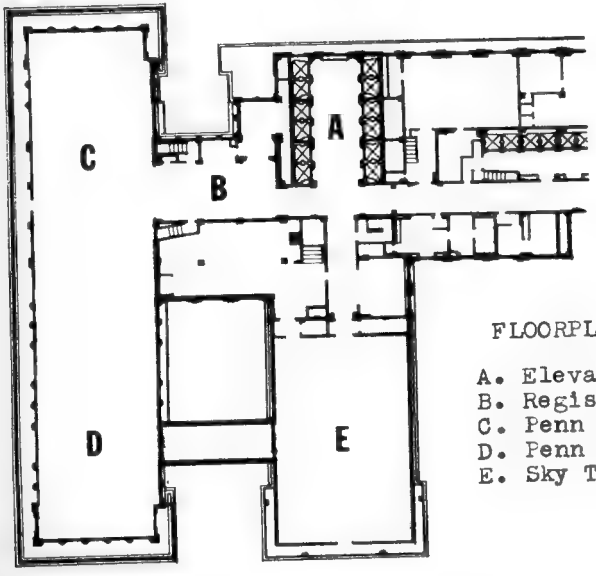

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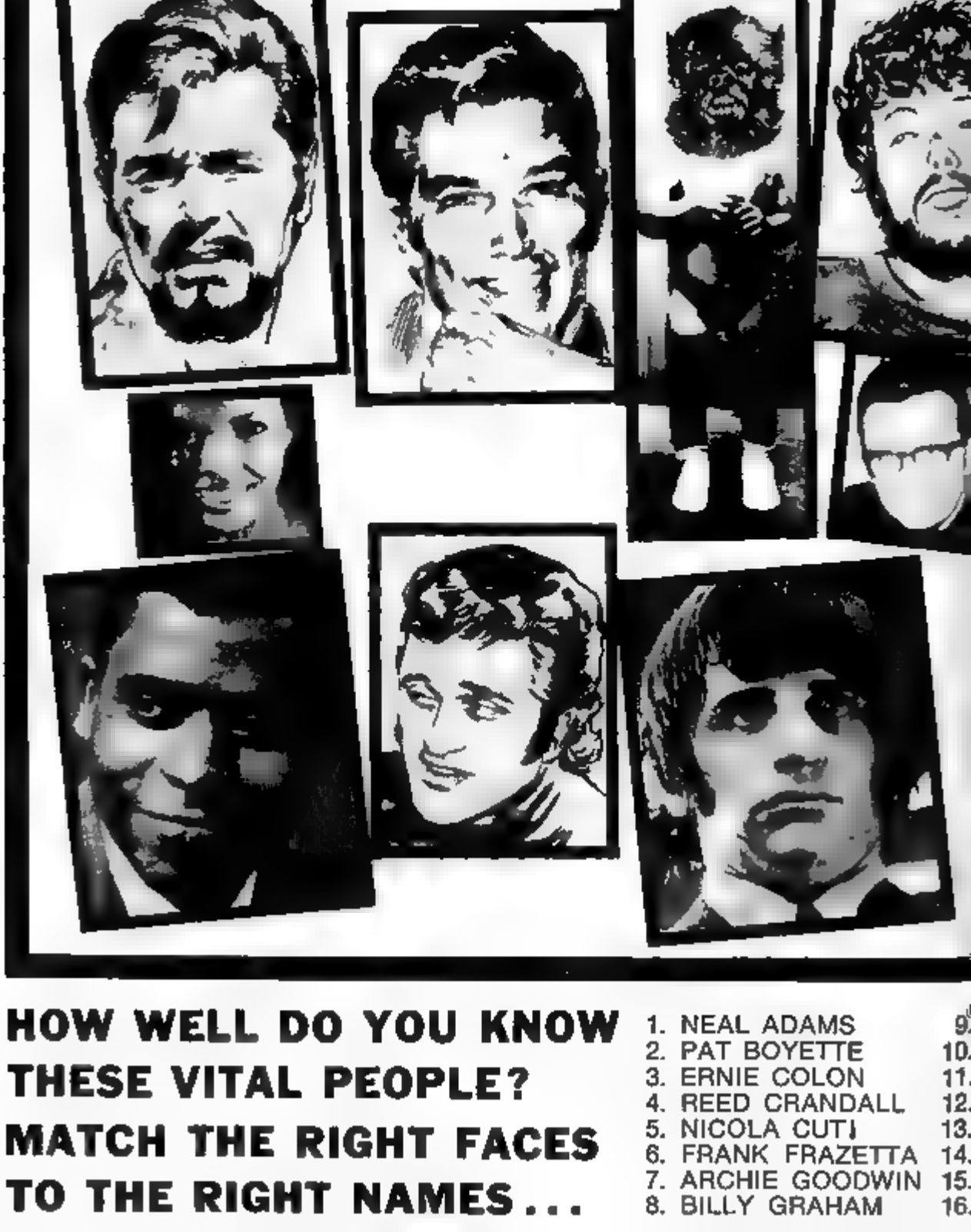

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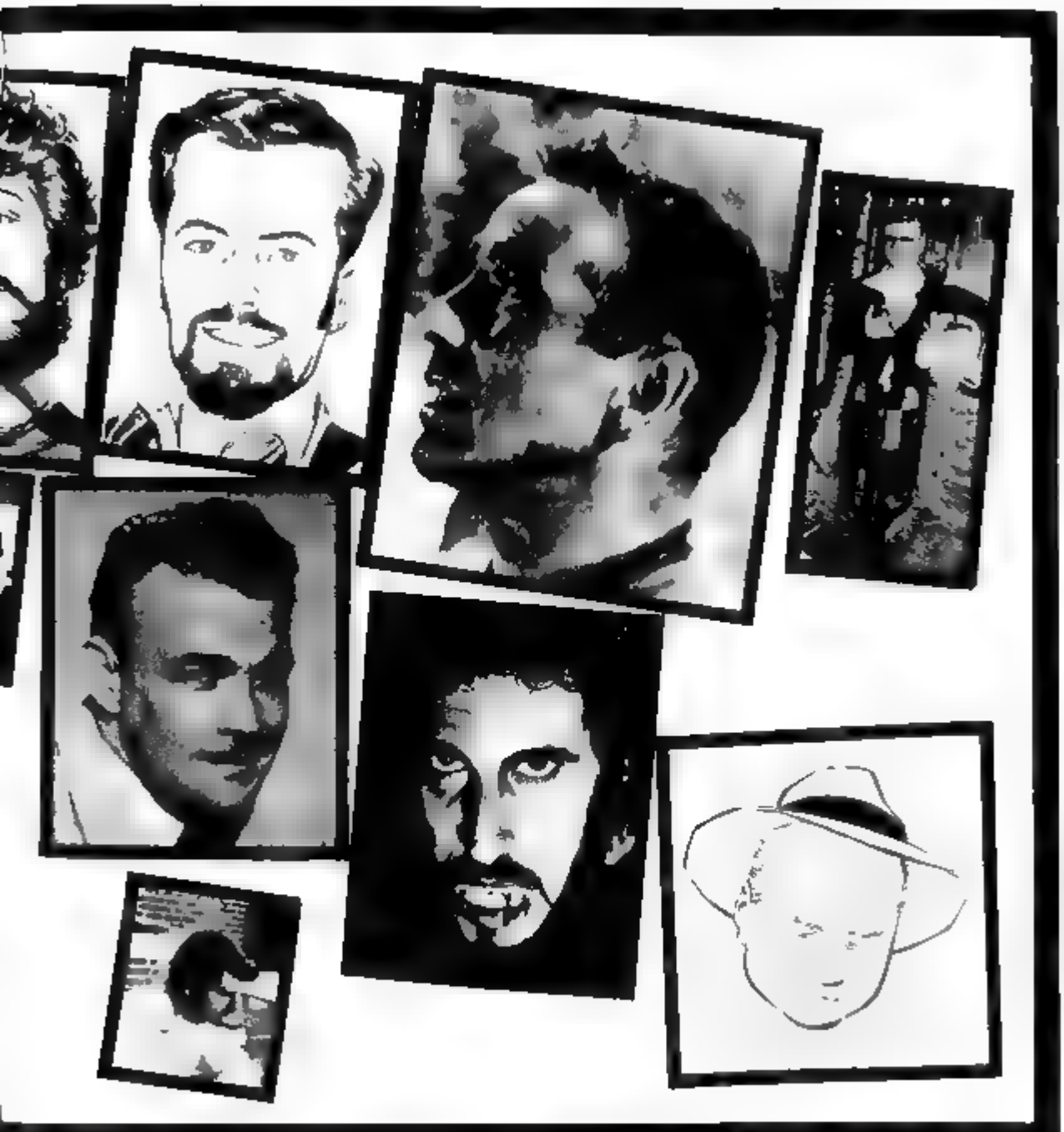

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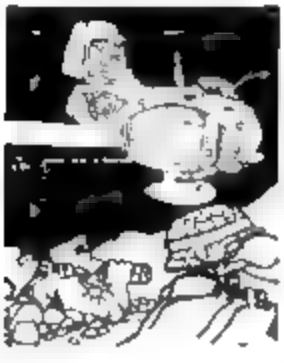

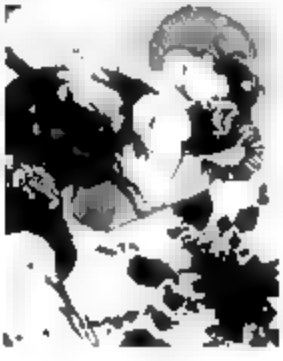

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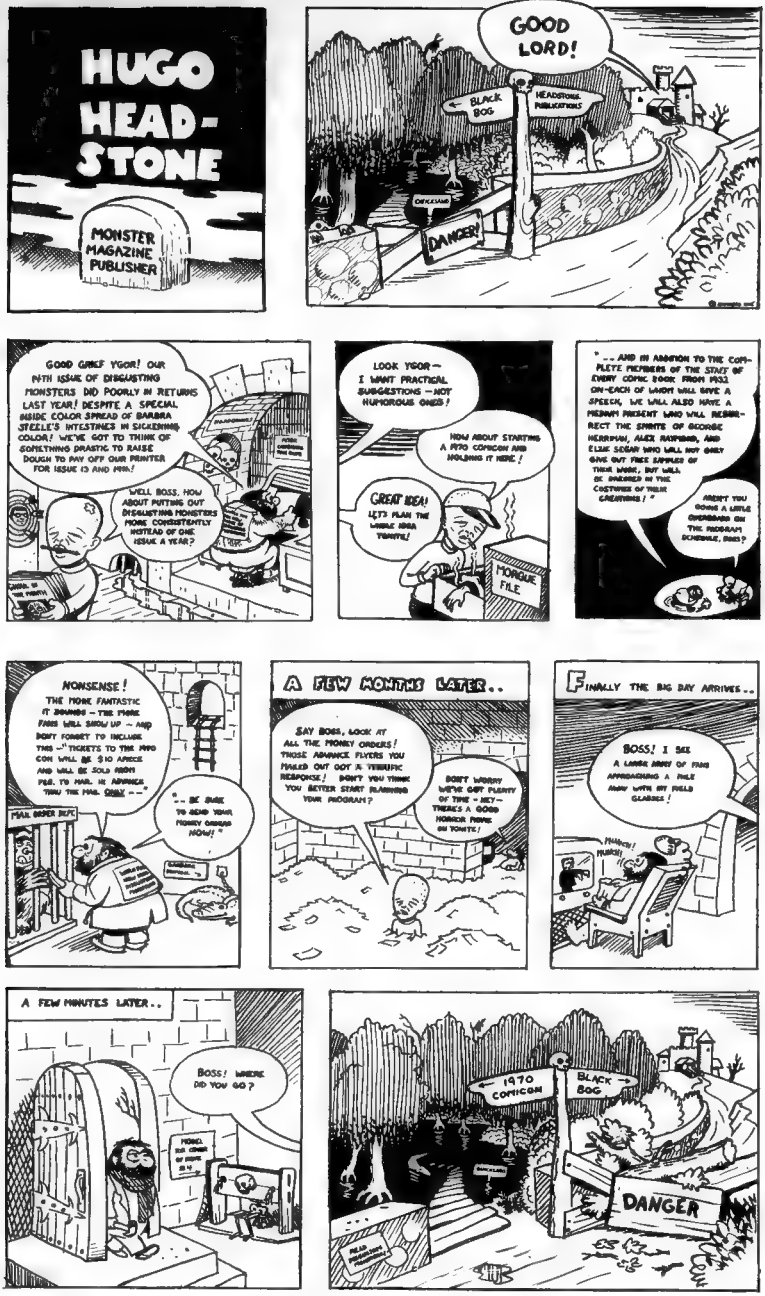
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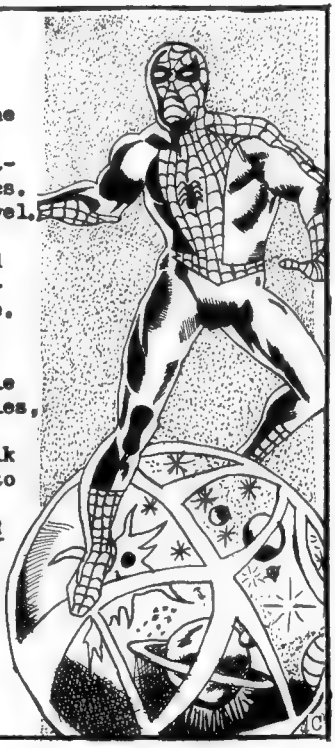

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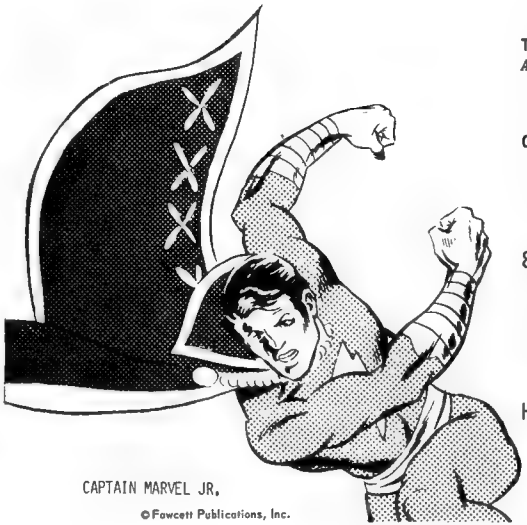

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JIM STERANKO IS ALIVE & WELL...

And is GUEST of HONOR at the Detroit con 1970

Sept. 4-7

at Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge

It's all happening here:

- FAMED GUEST SPEAKERS
- AUCTION EACH DAY
- PANEL DISCUSSIONS
- MASQUERADE PARTY
- ORIGINAL ART DISPLAYS
- MOVIES EVERY NIGHT

Illo courtesy of Marvin Gruin

Collectors' Delight!

THERE WILL BE A HUGE AUCTION EACH DAY AND THE DEALERS ROOM WILL BE OPEN 10 HOURS EACH DAY!

Special Events...

AUTOGRAPH PARTY, during which Jim Steranko will give a chalk-talk and we will auction off an hour of his time.

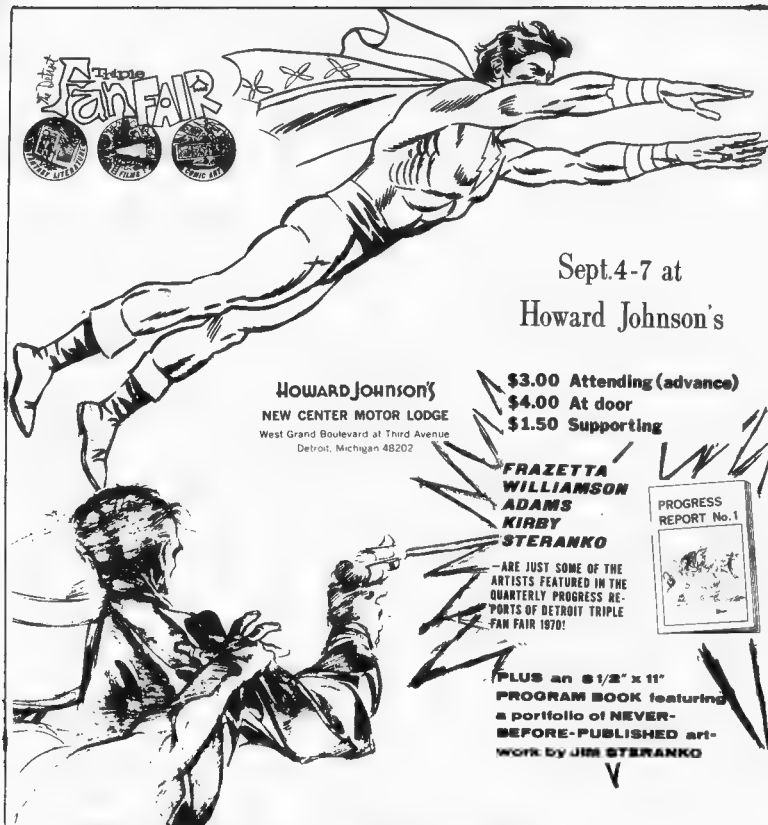
ORIGINAL ART DISPLAY, including Steranko's Talon, his Marvel work, and many of his magnificent paintings.

BURROUGH'S BIBLIOPHILES will hold their annual banquet (see P.R. for details).

DEALER TABLES

$10.00 each, available on first-come, first-served basis.

THE CONVENTION WITH SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE...



Sept. 4-7 at
Howard Johnson's

HOWARD JOHNSON'S
NEW CENTER MOTOR LODGE
West Grand Boulevard at Third Avenue
Detroit, Michigan 48202

$3.00 Attending (advance)
$4.00 At door
$1.50 Supporting

FRAZETTA
WILLIAMSON
ADAMS
KIRBY
STERANKO

—ARE JUST SOME OF THE ARTISTS FEATURED IN THE QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORTS OF DETROIT TRIPLE FAN FAIR 1970!

PLUS an 8 1/2" x 11" PROGRAM BOOK featuring a portfolio of NEVER-BEFORE-PUBLISHED artwork by JIM STERANKO

THE D.T.F.F. HAS MOVIES EVERY NITE 'TIL DAWN...

TRANSATLANTIC TUNNEL
KING KONG (complete with CENSORED scenes!)
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FABULOUS BARON MUNCHAUSEN
WHITE ZOMBIE
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TALES OF TERROR
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Triple Fan Fair

Detroit Triple Fan Fair, Dept. F-7
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Please send:

_____ **Attending $3. (prior to Aug. 1)**

_____ **Supporting $1.50**

NAME _____
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MOONCHILD · STARFLAKE

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MAY I GO SIS— HUH MAY I ??
ALRIGHT STARFLAKE DARLIN' I'LL TAKE YOU TO THE 1970 COMIC CON. BUT YOU HAVE TO PROMISE NOT TO ANNOY MR. BODÉ.
1970 COMIC CON.
1970 COMIC CON.
1970 COMIC CON
1970 COMIC
POOR LIL' BABE HAS A CRUSH ON "COBALT 60."

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ANY COMIC BOOK ARTWORK BY AL WILLIAMSON

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From

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1970 COMIC ART CONVENTION

program

AS THE SIOUX LAWMAN STRIDES THROUGH COPPER CREEK...
DAVIS MUST BE TAUGHT RESPECT FOR THE LAW-- EVEN WHEN IT SITS ON THE SHOULDERS OF A YOUNGSTER LIKE DUANE-- STILL DAMP BEHIND THE EARS!

AS THE GRIM STAR-WEARER PROCEEDS WITH MEASURED PACE THROUGH THE TOWN...
IT'S POW-WOW SMITH!
WOW! TEN TO ONE HE'S OUT AFTER THAT OWLHOOT MONTE DAVIS!

2 x 4

1970
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